



# The University of Alberta

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## A Retrospect

1908 - 1929





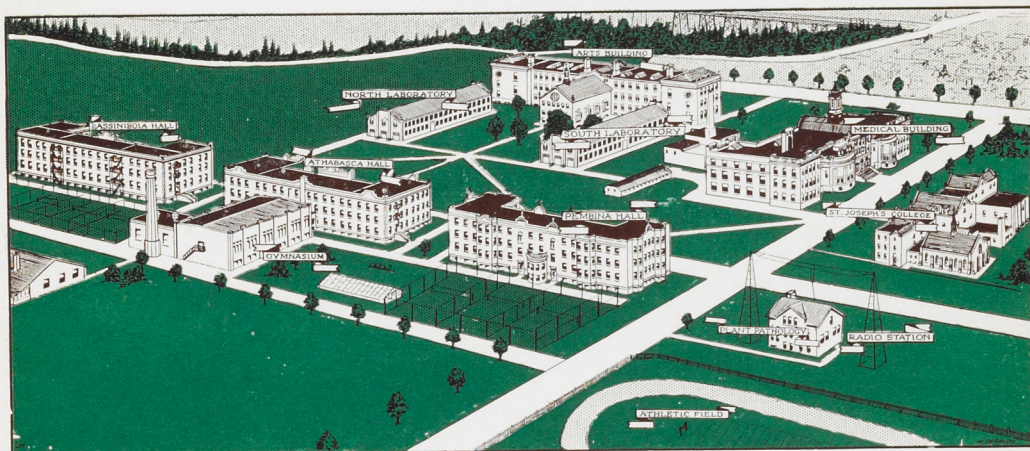


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# The University of Alberta

## A Retrospect 1908 - 1929

W. H. Alexander



*Hail, Alma Mater dear! we, sons and daughters true,  
Lift at thy shrine to-day our voice of song uprolled.  
Hark to our anthem clear! we pledge our faith anew;  
All hail, Alberta, with thine Evergreen and Gold!*

*Hail, Alma Mater dear! out on the prairie wide,  
Up where the foot-hills crouch 'neath giant snow-peaks cold,  
Naught save this strain we hear that swells like ocean-tide,  
All hail, Alberta, with thine Evergreen and Gold!*

*Hail, Alma Mater dear! loved in our college days,  
Still shall we look to thee though far from this thy fold,  
Lift then as lift we here our meed of liegemen's praise,—  
All hail, Alberta, with thine Evergreen and Gold!*





## PREFACE

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The sketch that follows does not pretend to be history in the sense that it sets forth all, or even the larger part, of the facts of the university of Alberta's growth and life during the twenty-one years of its existence. But if there is room under the cover of the name history for a considered interpretation of events rather than a meticulous recital of them, it may perhaps qualify. The decision must be left to those who have personal knowledge not merely of what is herein told but also of what has been omitted.

WILLIAM HARDY ALEXANDER.

*April* 11, 1929.







# THE PROLOGUE

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THE Pilgrim Fathers had scarcely made the first halting steps towards the crudest necessities of a material civilization when the gift of some books and a small sum of money from the estate of John Harvard came to them as a reminder that man shall not live by bread alone, and Harvard College came into being. Thus was established a tradition for this continent, and to that tradition the legislature of the newly constituted province of Alberta responded almost automatically when at its first session in 1906 it passed an act, sponsored by the Hon. Alexander Cameron Rutherford, premier and minister of education, for the establishment of a provincial university. There were doubts cherished, coming to open expression in some cases, about the wisdom of such an undertaking, but the tradition was too firm and too honorable to be gainsaid. "If I get some money," wrote Desiderius Erasmus in the early sixteenth century, "I shall buy some books, and then—I may buy some clothes." The young province needed clothes of all sorts, but it needed the books too, needed them perhaps first, like Erasmus.

One star, we are assured on good authority, differs from another star in glory, and what is true of stars, may well be true of river-lots in a settlement in western Canada. Who could have foreseen that river lot number 5 in the Edmonton settlement was marked by fate to be the seat of a university, the intellectual centre for an empire of two hundred and fifty thousand square miles. Square miles, be it noted, is the phrase for the time being,—except for those who possess the power of vision, not uncommon in the west, of peopling vast stretches of virgin territory with the human beings who will inhabit them tomorrow. Probably no eye save that of Dr. Rutherford's had ever discerned the latent possibilities of river lot number 5, but the judgment which he expressed by acquiring those two hundred and fifty-eight acres for the province as a university site, has been confirmed by general opinion ever since. And it must have taken a rare discernment, too, to form the vision of university buildings rising on that stretch of land covered by youngish poplar and scrubby willows, rather far removed from the houses and public structures of the town of Strathcona. Nothing on it suggested human life or work except a few sinuous trails and a much decayed log barn, and these spoke rather of an effort abandoned than of an enterprise begun. But the wild roses made it beautiful in June.



By now there was a university act and a university site; a university president was the next object of quest. It is a story of perennial interest that Dr. Rutherford tells about his visit to his own alma mater, McGill University, and the manner in which he proposed to Dr. Henry Marshall Tory, professor of physics in that institution, that he should abandon comfort and security, discount the future, and become the president of a university without staff, students, or buildings. At all events Dr. Tory's incurable optimism responded to Dr. Rutherford's challenge, and presently the world learned, or that part of it which took any interest in such matters, that the lieutenant-governor of Alberta in council had appointed Dr. H. M. Tory to the presidency of the university of Alberta, to assume the duties of the office on January 1, 1908. Such was the beginning of a twenty year incumbency which was to prove of incalculable benefit to the young institution.

The new president met his senate for the first time on March 30th, 1908, in the old I.O.O.F. hall, Strathcona, the place whereof knows it no more. Among other things which he had to say in the course of his first official words, the minute of that meeting records the following:—

"The establishment and organization of a university is a great work in which only few can participate. We are not called upon, fortunately, to re-organize some old, disrupted institution, but we are laying the foundations of a university which will be for the benefit and upbuilding of the province as a whole. We can congratulate ourselves on the fact that we are not called upon to deal with religious strifes of any nature, but are starting the work as a united body.

"We ought to realize too that we cannot cut loose from tradition. We must use tradition as a guide, and take from it the best that it contains as a lead for us in our work."

Those whose acquaintance with the university ranges over the whole period of its existence will agree on the fortunate nature of its untrammelled start, and on the judicious adhesion to sound tradition which has characterized it, even when new courses had to be sounded out.

After the president had reported that his preliminary investigations showed the likelihood of from thirty-five to forty students available for the autumn of 1908, it was agreed to open classes at that time, and the senate authorized the president to make the necessary preparations for class-room accommodations. He was also charged with the duty of finding professors in the departments of classics, English and modern languages. It is rather remarkable that a university starting in comparatively primitive conditions should have started out purely and simply with the humanities. It was a



policy that was considerably criticized, but it represented that adherence to tradition which Dr. Tory had emphasized in his very first speech to the Senate, and few would now argue that it was a mistake.

Three months later, on July 6th, at a meeting held in the city of Calgary, President Tory reported to the senate his choice of four wise men, or nearly so, from the east, and in the following order his recommendations were approved:

William Hardy Alexander, M.A., Ph.D., to be professor of classics;

Luther Herbert Alexander, M.A., to be professor of modern languages;

Edmund Kemper Broadus, M.A., Ph.D., to be professor of English;

William Muir Edwards, M.Sc., to be assistant professor of mathematics and lecturer in civil engineering.

Of these four Professor Edwards died in November, 1918, as commemorated on the bronze tablet at the entrance to Convocation Hall, Professor L. H. Alexander, after one year's service, returned to Columbia University, while the other two have become rooted to the soil of the Alberta campus, and are now pointed out to visitors as among its most ancient historical remains. Those who are interested in archaeology or the new science of prehistory might ask Dean Kerr for a private view of a certain faculty photograph he possesses, and attempt in this picture to locate Alberta's two senior professors.

#### FIRST EPISODE (CHILDHOOD).

The protagonists, if we may call the president and the professors that, were now selected, and Dr. Tory had assured the senate that the chorus of some thirty-five or forty students were hanging around the wings in the different towns and villages of Alberta. The actual stage had been fixed as the upper floor of the Duggan St. (now Queen Alexandra) public school. It remained only to name the day on which the drama would begin, and the 23rd of September was finally chosen. The professors had all arrived some time before that; they had had an opportunity to marvel at

*"the vast Serbonian bog  
'Twi'x't Damiatra and mount Casius old,  
Where armies whole have perished,"*

as Whyte avenue then was, to go house-hunting in the unprepossessing range of selection which the town then afforded, and to visit the university site, where they first realized how handsomely the future had been discounted. By the 23rd most of Dr. Tory's prospective students had reported. The first to sign the matricula was Rev. F. Stacey McCall of Alberta





**Queen Alexandra School**

The first home of the University of Alberta, September to December, 1908.

College, who hung around for a couple of days to secure the coveted position, as keenly as any homesteader encamped on the land-office steps to secure a choice filing.

There were some forty undergraduates in all, two or three of them with advanced credits, but the great majority simple matriculants, and matriculants were so much simpler in those days. These last were really the pioneer class of the university, for, although graduating exercises were held in 1911, it was the class of 1912 which from the beginning to the end of its college career was genuine University of Alberta stuff. When this class held its fifteenth reunion in 1927, every member reported in, and it was found that the graduates of 1912 were filling useful and important positions over the whole continent.

The way in which those early students played might amuse the undergraduates of today, but there was no mistaking their serious purpose when it came to work. The opening of the new university came to them as a veritable godsend; the higher education they could ill have afforded to go east to seek had been brought to their doors. They acknowledged defects in their preparation and were keen to correct them. After all, the instructional lines were pretty clearly drawn; it was in play that tradition had to be formed.



A literary society was promptly formed which undertook the management of most of the extra-curricular activities, exclusive of sport, as, for example, the first "party" that autumn, a masquerade at which Rev. J. Macphail Waggett amused some and petrified others by appearing as a Zulu. Those who have studied Zulu fashion-plates will appreciate. Athletics required a little stimulation, and it was professors Edwards and W. H. Alexander who first exhibited to some Alberta students a rugby football, and showed them how to pass, punt, and drop-kick. All this, with tackling practice, took place on some open fields about where the C.N. Strathcona station now stands. Professor L. H. Alexander organized a glee club, and did the best with what he had. Not even the members of his chorus will quarrel, at this distance in time, over that way of putting it. Nor was the Gateway long in making its appearance, more given in those days to literary effort and very little to "casserolling." How all this was managed in days when there was a formal test every month and two full sets of finals a year, may be left to the easy-going undergraduates of 1929 to imagine.

The first stage served very nicely to get the play started, but meantime a much finer one was nearing completion, and in January, 1909, the classes and the whole university equipment (about one small truck full) were moved to the upper floor of the Strathcona Collegiate Institute, which provided a very comfortable and convenient home for the next two years and a half. Each of the four professors had his own special lecture-room, and a very pleasant large south room became the library where the presiding spirits were Miss Jennie Carmichael (Mrs. W. R. Howson), the president's secretary and Miss Eugenie Archibald, the university's first librarian. Already some valuable volumes were appearing on the shelves; the senate's five thousand dollar vote was showing results.

In the fall of 1909 the university site began to acquire some significance. Plans had been prepared by the government's architect for an initial building, a very substantial looking edifice in Macleod sandstone, and on a bright September morning the ceremony of turning the first sod for its foundation occurred, with the late Dr. W. D. Ferris at the plough handles and Dr. Rutherford holding the lines. No one realized on that morning of high hopes how many years were to pass before the foundation then built was to be utilized, or how much dynamite was going to be needed to mould it into a new shape for the present Arts building to be set on; but the university's earliest graduates will recall how potently in successive Aprils it suggested that university swimming-





**Turning of first sod, Arts Building, September, 1909.**

pool which still unfortunately remains a dream. But though the main building had to wait, a year later, in the spring of 1910, Alberta (now St. Stephen's) College, started the erection of its building on the plot assigned it by the Senate, and probably conferred a great benefit on the university by so doing, in view of the political storms of those days which were threatening the very existence of the institution.

It was in the early weeks of that same year that the students of the university of Alberta blazed forth into the distinction of a university "conversat," an event which it is almost useless to describe in these times when everything is a dance, but the old-timers will understand. There was a programme—my dear, can you stand it?—and a supper, and after that "promenades" on which perfectly good dance music was being wasted, just blowing off like Turner Valley gas. A few daring souls thought of putting it to use, the president smiled assent, and in a few minutes a circle of chairs about thirty feet in diameter had been formed. Inside this there entered for the next waltz four valiant hearts who gyrated softly, while the promenaders from beyond the chair-backs eyed them curiously as one might eye a new specimen in a zoological garden. From such a tiny seed has grown the great dancing industry of the university of Alberta.

In November, 1910, the government of the province introduced and passed a new university act which had for its great feature the separation of academic and financial management, up till that time both vested in the senate. It is only right



that mention should be made here of the fine work done by the first senate of the university in handling all the problems arising in connection with the institution in those early days; theirs was not all easy sailing, especially in the summer of 1910, but they did not give up the ship. With the late Chancellor Stuart at their head, Messrs. Beck, Riddell, Hutchings, Nolan, Boyd, Brett, McDougall, Gaetz, Strathy, Galbraith, Dickson, McCaig, Ferris, Jenkins and Harcourt, got the young university on its feet, and when the new board of governors took hold, they entered into the management of a going concern. This board was organized in January, 1911.

The year 1911 saw the first commencement exercises of the university of Alberta. Three students who had begun with first year standing complete were ready in May for their degrees, and so was held the first convocation to confer degrees won in course, and, incidentally, the only convocation ever held off the university grounds. The original trio were Decima Robinson (Mrs. Edwin T. Mitchell), A. J. Law and R. H. Dobson. These degrees were conferred in the assembly hall of the Strathcona Collegiate Institute.

During the summer of 1911 work was pushed forward on the first university building to be brought to completion, Athabasca (later, Athabaska) Hall, designed to serve as a combined residence and teaching building, and in the fall of the year possession was duly taken. Pioneer conditions provided some strange accommodations; thus, for example, Professor Kerr and Professor Alexander shared as their office a room designed to serve finally as a lavatory. Naturally the floor was laid with an all around fall to the centre, and now those who have noticed all these years the slight limp with which those gentleman walk, will recognize it as the result of much hillside ploughing. The library was on the floor nearest heaven—such a getting up stairs!—and lecture-rooms were cunningly distributed here and there in most elusive places. The present lounge was the dining-room, and in the spring of 1912 the university “ball” was held there, to the detriment of many toes, fair and otherwise. Assiniboia Hall was built in 1912-3, and Pembina in 1913-4. All of these have in their time provided extensively for class-room accommodation. The combination of residential quarters and class-rooms occasioned much mirth at times, as when, for example, some Alberta Caruso trolled forth the latest popular song, *fortissimo, con amore, e molto sostenuto*, while in the immediate vicinity classes were in progress. Herman Trelle became famous for entertaining classes in English with gramophone selections long before he burst upon the world as a winner with seed grains.



The university may claim to have functioned efficiently in its first and second homes, the Queen Alexandra School and the Strathcona Collegiate Institute, but it naturally could not under those circumstances give its students that *vie intime* which has always been quite as powerful a factor as lectures in the development of thought and character. Now with its own buildings and its own site, with the students living in close touch with one another and in contact with the younger



#### UNIVERSITY FACULTY, 1913

Bottom row—Prof. MacEachran, Dean Kerr, Prof. Broadus,  
**President Tory**, Prof. Alexander, Prof. Edwards.

Top row—Prof. Sheldon, Dr. Fairley, Mr. Race, Prof. Lewis,  
Prof. Burgess, Prof. Allan, Prof. Lehmann.

members of the staff, with an excellent playing field provided south of Pembina, there began to develop by leaps and bounds a true college spirit. Everything appeared to be set for a remarkable development in equipment and numbers. Each successive year counted its students by scores where the preceding one had been satisfied with tens. The contract was let for the construction of a much larger main building than had been earlier contemplated. Hope and progress seemed to march hand in hand. People had begun to talk of a student body of 1,000 by 1918. The faculty was being rapidly added to; older departments had their teaching force augmented, new departments and even faculties were being added all



along the line. It was a wonderful time, one of those seasons in the life of an institution when, within and without the breast, there is felt a continual *haut le coeur*.

During the late winter of 1913-4 there was formed, under the guidance of an officer from the militia department at Ottawa, a tentative officers' training corps (C.O.T.C.), and with the advent of spring, marching and countermarching amid some confusion of amateur commanders seeking the appropriate word of command and finding it not, was the order of the day on the campus in front of Athabaska and Assiniboia. At a meeting of the Senate held April 14th, 1914, the constitution and programme of the University of Alberta C.O.T.C. was submitted for approval, and accepted. Concurrently a member of the senate moved that the university be instructed to arrange for lectures on peace, especially in its extension courses. Prophetically, the motion was lost. On June 28th, a Serbian student assassinated the Austrian crown-prince at Sarajevo; on August 4 Great Britain stepped into the vast conflict that ensued. A few days later the parliament of Canada authorised the raising of an expeditionary force. War had become a grim reality for the young university, not yet six years old.

## SECOND EPISODE (WAR)

How grim no one guessed. Much of life's activities went on unchanged. A large number of men left the province but mostly old country men. Two or three English students hastened home, one of whom, John Parker, fell in the early days of the war. But most of the crowd were back in the fall, ready to "carry on," not in the new game, as presently, but in the old. It was the generally accepted opinion that the war could not last six months; many doubted if the Canadian contingent, in training at Valcartier, would ever get over for active service. But the C.O.T.C. got considerably more attention notwithstanding.

*"For it's Tommy this, and Tommy that, and Tommy,  
'ows yer soul,  
But it's: Thank you, Mr. Atkins, when the drums  
begin to roll."*

But the autumn of 1914, one of those glorious, golden autumns which Alberta brings forth every now and then out of her treasure, was made forever notable in university annals by success in mimic warfare: it was then that the rugby team, under the direction of Gordon Powis, a McGill rugby man, imbibed new ideas of how that game was played, and pro-





Provincial Rugby Champions, 1914

ceeded to try them out on the astonished Eskimos and Tigers, so effectively that it ended in a provincial championship. It was a beautiful aggregation, that team, perfectly balanced and endowed about equally with brains and brawn. But the present registrar can supply full information on these points; it was still the days of the old scrimmage and Ottewell with his two companions formed an admirable steam-roller for weight, but also finished with a high-speed engine. In another year practically all the members of the 1914 rugby team were at the front, and when yet another year had passed, the majority had played their last game and fought their last battle. They must not be forgotten for their fine feats in the field of sport; as warriors they have their memorial.

When the spring of 1915 came in, it was seen that the struggle would be long and arduous. The P.P.C.L.I. had begun recruiting through the Canadian universities for men to fill the yawning gaps in its strength, and Alberta was ready to do its part. So in the pleasant April days of that year, when professors were breaking out in final examinations and the buds of the trees were swelling with the new leaves, the boys were beginning to talk of going overseas, and it was not long before a platoon was signed up under the command of Lieutenant Stanley Fife. Few surely who were around the university in those days will forget their march from the campus to the Strathcona station and those last farewells that covered the whole gamut of human emotion from loud hilarity to restrained anguish. It was a great adventure of course, but most people realized now that it was something more than a camping trip and a sea voyage. In the clash of empires the lives of our men had become the pawns.



First University of Alberta Draft, Second Universities  
Company, P.P.C.L.I., 1915.

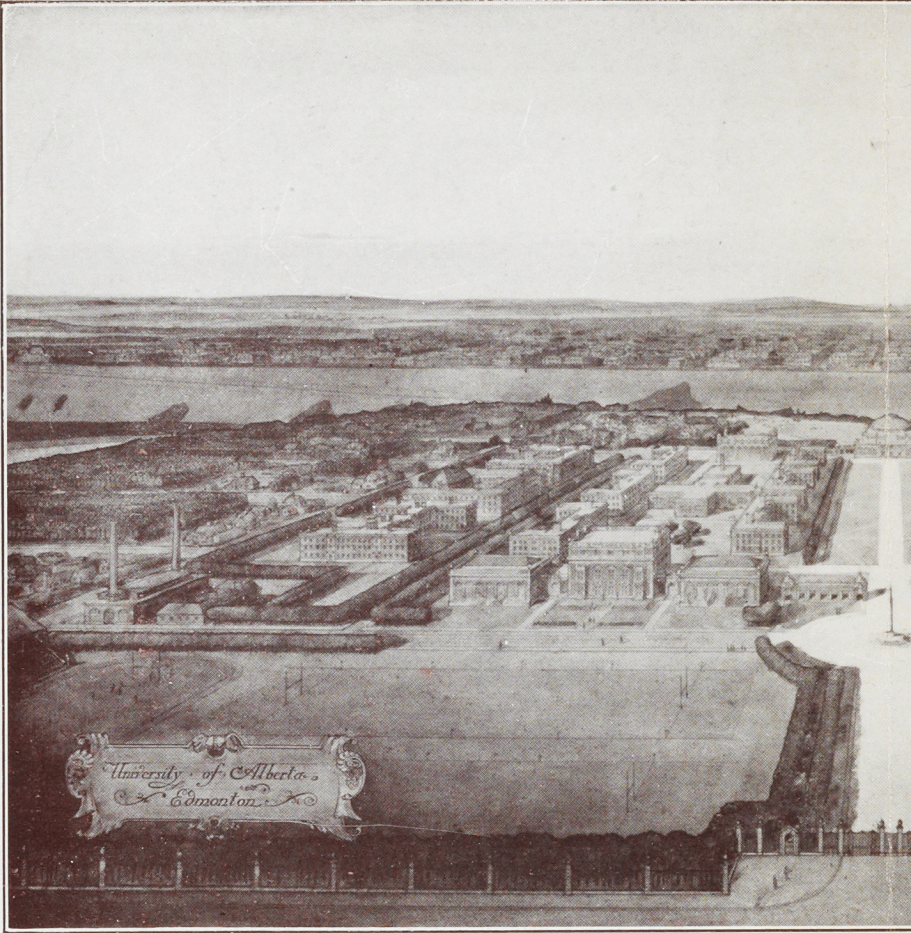


Top—G. T. Riley, J. A. Carswell, J. S. Kerr.  
Middle—A. McQueen, E. Parsons, C. Beck.  
Bottom—N. McArthur, R. Stevens, A. T. Glanville.  
With Dr. Tory and Captain H. J. MacLeod.

Yet the work of “carrying on” at home and even of preparing in full faith for the day of peace had to go forward, and in September, 1915, the College of Agriculture was born. Dean Howes came to look after the infant, and that event alone justified its birth. This was now the university’s fifth faculty. Law had come in 1912, Applied Science established an existence independent of Arts in 1913, and Medicine is its twin. Thus by 1915 the faculty framework of the university was complete from within; that sixth sense of the university, its great external faculty, the Department of Extension, had already been provided for in 1913, when it was launched—a good sturdy barque, as of necessity—with A. E. Ottewell of class 1912 as skipper.

In October, 1915, with the great shadow beginning to overspread the Canadian landscape, the main building, the home of the faculty of Arts and Sciences, was formally opened. The ceremonies were, under the circumstances, of the simplest;





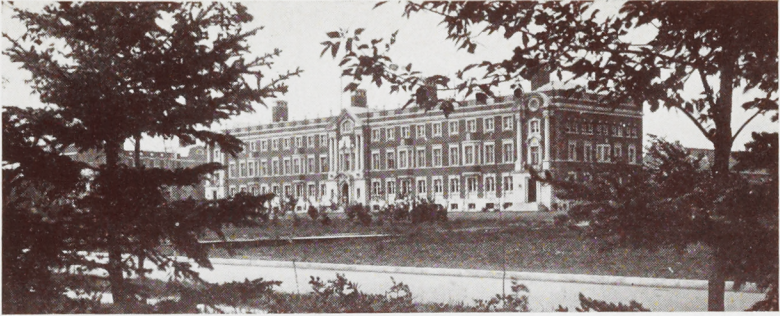
Plan of Buildings for University





ty of Alberta—Drawn in 1912.





Arts Building

it was impossible to feel triumphant over this splendid beginning in the teaching buildings proper of the university when the fate of nations, including our own, was in the balance. But the faculty and the students who entered into the use of the new quarters forthwith, realized how infinitely more satisfactory it is both to instruct and to receive instruction in a place well and carefully planned for that purpose. The Arts building has demonstrated in fourteen years of fairly hard usage the excellence of its construction; its only defect, and that not a defect for which designers or builders could be held accountable, is that the class-rooms are uncomfortably small for the college population of today.

All during the winter of 1915-16, under the command of H. J. Macleod, the C.O.T.C., now more thoughtfully regarded than ever before, went steadily on with its task of preparing college men in Alberta for what now seemed the inevitable duty. The seriousness with which its training was taken, was evidenced in the increasing smartness of the drills and the augmented zeal for the study of military theory. The contagion reached the faculty. A platoon of professors was organized, conspicuous among them being Privates Tory, Kerr, MacEachran, and other such. The instructing officer was the late and much lamented Lieutenant S. D. Killam. On one occasion he had just finished delivering in his best style, plus some of the rhetorical gems in which the Infantry Training, 1914, abounded, an explanation of, let us say, "Advance in fours to the left," when suddenly from the ranks Private H. M. Tory piped up: "Lieutenant Killam, there's a bad draught through the Convocation Hall; would you mind shutting the east door?" The foundations of the Empire and every last sacred tradition of the British Army rocked violently to and fro, and it was even thought that Jove's thunder-



bolt might descend upon him who had sinned beyond all redemption, but *Professor Killam* shut the door as required, and then *Lieutenant Killam* resumed the drill.

Certain interesting activities in connection with the lives of the university of Alberta men serving overseas, grew up at this time. One was the Soldiers' Comforts Club which enlisted



the support of a large number of the faculty wives and the college girls; this society maintained a steady flow of socks and cakes and candy, if such things can be said to flow, to the front until the end of hostilities. Incidentally one of the best knitters was the late Mr. F. G. Bowers, former librarian of the university, who relieved the monotony of a bed of pain and at the same time ministered to the needs of others by the work of his expert hands. Then there was the famous News Letter, a brief description of which follows, taken from the Edmonton Bulletin of Dec. 31, 1928:

"The idea of the News Letter was originated by Professor W. Muir Edwards as a method of keeping the students overseas in touch with the university. It was issued every week, at first as a typewritten sheet, and later as a printed paper, and its circulation finally reached about five hundred copies. Following the death of Professor Edwards in November, 1918, the News Letter



was carried on by Professor W. H. Alexander who had already been associated with Professor Edwards as assistant editor, until, with the final disbanding of the troops in the late spring of 1919, publication ceased. The News Letter was unique, for no other university used this means of keeping in touch with its men, and the University of Alberta News Letter became a well-known and much appreciated periodical by men of all the Canadian colleges at the front."

The mailing of the News Letter, week by week, and the keeping of the mailing list "active" was another of the functions of the Soldiers' Comforts Club. All in all the university's men at the front came to feel that they were very present in the thoughts of those at home.

Those were the years of Khaki graduations. The list of men receiving degrees became smaller and smaller, and those who appeared on Convocation day were, as a rule, in uniform, an indication of their early departure for army service. Only the very young lads and the physically rejected, both groups gnawing out their souls, remained, and much of the duty of keeping alive university tradition and carrying on university societies rested with the girls, and they rose to the occasion with spirit and capacity. It was in 1917-8 that the Students' Union was the first time headed by a woman—*dux femina facti*—and Miss Katie McCrimmon (Mrs. Russell Love) greatly distinguished herself in that office.

Early in 1916 authorization was given at Ottawa for the enlistment of the Western Universities' Battalion (196th Bn., C.E.F.), with one company drawn from each of the four western provinces. Alberta's company was organized by Capt. H. J. Macleod, with Capt. Cowper as second in command, and was soon recruited to strength. The men were housed, fed, and trained on the university grounds, which in consequence assumed the most military appearance they presented during the whole war. The Alberta company left for Camp Hughes, Manitoba, in June, and later in the year for England, where, in common with the rest of the battalion, they lost their regimental identity, but apparently none of them ever have forgotten the long months of university men's camaraderie before the break-up. With the departure of Captain Macleod the command of the Alberta C.O.T.C. passed into the hands of Lieutenant (afterwards Captain) W. H. Alexander who carried on to the spring of 1919, with Lieutenant (afterwards Captain) S. D. Killam, and subsequently Lieutenant E. W. Sheldon as adjutants.



Subsequent military efforts were the raising in 1916 of a section from the university under Capt. Moshier for the 12th field ambulance, C.A.M.C., C.E.F., which took away at one stroke a large number of our medical students, and in 1918 of a section for the Tanks battalion under Lieutenants A. L. Burt and Geo. H. Steer. But, quite apart from these organized efforts, there was a constant stream of students passing out into the many military units which had their origin in Alberta, especially perhaps the 78th battery, C.F.A., with headquarters at Lethbridge. In all these various units C.O.T.C. men found opportunities for promotion and for special training because of a knowledge of military rudiments acquired here. In the later days of the war the air-service began to attract Albertans, and "Cy" Becker, now president of the Northern Aero Club, had a particularly varied and exciting experience. The naval service also claimed a few. All in all the university of Alberta sent into active service from the staff, the student-body, and the employees, four hundred and eighty-four persons. The large majority, of course, was composed of students, and when it is remembered that at the outbreak of the war the university's student-body numbered only four hundred and forty, it would seem as though Alberta had done her bit.

A rather unusual contribution to war-work made by the university of Alberta was the institution under the control and direction of President (Colonel) H. M. Tory of the Khaki University. Dr. Tory, with his usual foresight, had realized that even when the war ended, it would be months before demobilization could take place on any large scale, and that under ordinary circumstances these months would be simply wasted time for the thousands of university men overseas, and for the many others who had now learned to appreciate an education, unless some agency were in the field to seize the opportunity. He succeeded in persuading the federal government to share his views,—excellent evidence that he was a good persuader,—and so from the beginning of 1918 clear through to the end of demobilization in 1919, he and his staff, having set up school at Ripon, provided not only instruction in every conceivable subject, but also direction and advice. No one can ever possibly calculate the gain in time and energy which Canada achieved in the Khaki university headed by Alberta's president. There are possibly other achievements of Dr. Tory's which are greater, none that will be more gratefully remembered.

The great happiness, the infinite sense of relief, which the end of the war brought, was sadly interfered with by the



emotions provoked through the descent upon Alberta at just that time of the terrible influenza scourge. Hardly had university classes been reassembled in the fall of 1918 when it became necessary to close down. Pembina Hall was offered and accepted as a hospital when it was seen that the plague's victims were so numerous as to overtax all ordinary accommodations for the sick. It was there that Professor Edwards, who was acting as receiving officer, was mortally stricken and died while the shouts over the armistice were still ringing in the streets, and it was there too that Clara May Bell, one of the best friends whom overseas men had, one who for her kindly words and deeds most deserved to live, passed away; *dis aliter visum*. It was a peculiar irony of fate that it was just these two persons who had put the University of Alberta's soldiers so deeply in their debt who should be among the very few victims whom the influenza claimed around the university.

It may seem to some that this war episode has been unduly extended. There are those who would gladly forget, and those of the younger generation perhaps who are not interested in knowing. But in any rational account of the university's life it must have a large place. Its effect on the university was much like its effect on many of the university men who went through the fiery furnace, seven times heated, and yet came back. They went in boys, and they came out men, who had looked at death full in the eye. The university was six years old when the war broke out, a veritable academic infant; she emerged full-grown, not in years, but in that type of experience which, once in a generation, takes the place of mere lapse of time. She gained in those four years a poise and assurance that forty years of peace might not have brought. She had stood in the battle-line beside her older and slightly superior sisters of the east and of the older British world, and had made good. That is why the second episode has been retailed at length.

While the university welcomed with rejoicing the men who returned, she did not forget those who had not. The bronze tablet on the left hand side as you enter Convocation Hall, bears the names of those eighty-two in a majestic simplicity. Within the hall the memorial organ, as often as its pipes speak beneath the understanding touch at the keyboard, recalls their sacrifice, and particularly each recurring Armistice Day when the university congregation gathers, not to perpetuate strifes and hatreds, but to take the sting from death and victory from the grave by turning back the pages of affectionate memory.





War Memorial Organ



### THIRD EPISODE (THE NEW ORDER).

The war is supposed to have taught a number of lessons. Whether these lessons have really been read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested, no one can yet tell, but it is along the line of some of these that the "new order" is feeling its way. One that seemed conclusively established by the experiences of 1914-1918 is the importance of the command of resources and of the development of the technique of practical science. Napoleon's cynicism about God being on the side of the bigger battalions has taken a different turn, though the idea is in essence the same. Victory will hereafter be to the nation that has learned how to exploit most successfully its natural endowment, whether of economic minerals or of food, and how to keep, technically, one jump ahead of the other fellow. Of course, we have all said that we do not propose to fight any more, but still nations should always, it appears, anticipate the worst. A conspicuous feature of the "new order" therefore is an intensified devotion to the material elements of existence, and it is only natural that universities, the university of Alberta among the others, should be found devoting more attention than ever to research along scientific lines, especially in such aspects of science as have practical applications. The years from 1918 to the present will be found full of the evidences of this movement.

The year 1919-20, to turn aside from this main theme for a moment, was made notable in university history by the return of the troops. Ex-soldiers, former students of the university but considerably older in years and infinitely older in experience, were back, to pick up in most cases where they had left off, but in some instances to transfer their energies to other fields, to which an altered view of life had directed their attention. This was the bargain-counter session of the university. All sorts of adjustments had to be made to enable the men to resume, and the university was not ungenerous in her dealings. "I wish mankind no ill, and, having been there, I'll say this war was a terrible thing, but I don't know how else I ever would have got my Latin 2-4," is a fairly typical remark of those days. Brave hearts that had stormed the Hindenburg line were graciously excused the lesser effort required to carry the trenches of the subjunctive in dependent clauses.

Discipline sagged somewhat; it had been too much to the fore in too many students' lives during the preceding years. There was a veritable craze for social affairs. Youth felt that it had been cheated out of a good deal, and was in haste to make up arrears. It was a period for the exercise of tact



on the part of governing bodies and teaching staff everywhere, and on the whole it seems to have been not badly managed. Class-work was stimulated by the presence in the lecture rooms of men who had seen something of life and a great deal of death; many conventional explanations that had served in the past, were put under the fire of minds whetted by an unusual adventure. The military tactics of Hannibal and the curve described by a projectile in its flight had taken on a new meaning.

It was during this session also that the university curriculum in all faculties was subjected to careful scrutiny and revision, and few would dispute the reasonableness and desirability of the changes then made. The general aim was, in faculties where it was at all possible, to secure greater freedom in the election of courses without abandoning the basic features of a sound education. This work has been further developed of late in the faculty of Arts and Sciences, and it is fair to say that its curriculum now represents a very generous interpretation of a liberal education in modern terms.

The scientific developments hinted at in the introduction to this episode began in 1919 with the addition of several chairs in the faculty of Agriculture, and received material consecration by the commencing of operations in the spring of 1920 on the second of what we may call the great university buildings. It was about this same time that the fundamental sciences,



Medical Building



physics and chemistry, received substantial increase in their equipment. But perhaps the most noteworthy item indicative of the new order was the foundation in 1920 of the scientific and industrial research council of Alberta, whereby the whole scientific ability and equipment of the university was placed at the disposal of the province for the purpose of providing assistance in meeting the questions arising in connection with the exploitation of the natural resources of the Alberta economic area. This led in time to the institution of a new type of professorship, namely the research professorships, the incumbents of which are relieved from the ordinary routine of teaching work so that they may devote themselves entirely to the solution of special problems. The two particular investigations that have been selected relate to Alberta coals and to the economic utilization of the McMurray tar sands. The whole faculty of Agriculture has also become an experimental station, and this is concretized for campus dwellers by the new plant pathology laboratory on the "Acropolis" which can be included in the sphere of the beautiful only if we accept with unflinching courage the Socratic dictum that the useful is also the beautiful.

The relation of the university to the new order was emphasized by the impressing of Dr. Tory into the task of re-organizing and re-vitalizing the National Research Council of Canada. That institution had a body somewhat tenuous and meagre and insufficiently nourished, and was much in need of a soul. To provide this soul became the duty of Alberta's president. Incidentally it is worth pointing out that this connection with Ottawa has proved of great importance to the university of Alberta, by enabling it to secure funds for the prosecution of researches it was especially qualified to carry out and by opening up opportunities for Alberta students to obtain graduate scholarships in various departments of investigation. It is an excellent thing to be well equipped for a piece of work, but it is no less excellent to have a friend at court who can point out with personal emphasis the fact that you are thus equipped. And from the standpoint of the university in general, nothing could possibly have done more to associate it with the new order than the fact that its president was also head of the National Research Council.

All the while a profound change was taking place in the character of the student-body, a change due in the first instance to the great growth in numbers from 1920 on. Up till then the university had been small, measured by the size of the student population. This had indisputable advantages. There was a homogeneity among the staff and students which is only possible under such circumstances. Aristotle thought



that the size of the city-state should be determined by the possibility of the magistrates knowing all the citizens and the citizens knowing the magistrates, and viewed from this Aristotelian stand-point, the university of Alberta in the old days had been an almost ideal community. It was literally possible to know pretty nearly every member of the college community, and the students of the earlier years will perhaps agree that some of the best instruction came rather from personal contact with members of the faculty than from formal instruction. It may be a condition of primeval and incredible simplicity from the point of view of those vast aggregations like Columbia and California which number their students by the thousands and thousands, but perhaps one does not need to be a poet or a social dreamer to feel that the age of innocence has charms all its own. From 1920 on, the situation has changed rapidly at Alberta, and though the old tradition hangs gallantly on, it is becoming more and more difficult to live up to it. The hundredth part of a professor's time and care is less than the tenth.

But there is another side to the inevitably increasing separation of faculty and students which attends the growth of numbers, and it is a side from which student life gains strength and independence. In the earlier days, it may be that the professors stood much too close to student societies and publications, with the result that these depended too much on faculty advice. In the new order it has been necessary for the students to carry the weight of their own organizations and to fill the columns of their own papers. This will become even more marked as time goes on, and is not a thing to be regretted. But there is perhaps scarcely anything which an alumnus of the early days would notice more were he now to be brought in contact with university of Alberta undergraduate life than the sturdy independence, growing steadily all the time, of college men and women.

In April, 1928, President H. M. Tory reached a decision which had for some time seemed inevitable, that he must devote himself either to the problems of the growing university exclusively, or, relinquishing that obligation, give all his time and energy to the management and direction of the National Research Council. The call to the latter task with its intimate relation to great industrial and commercial problems confronting the Canadian people seemed of the two the more imperative, and accordingly, as from June 1, Dr. Tory laid down the reins of office which he had taken up a little over twenty years before. The event was felt to mark quite distinctly the end of an era for the university. It was the era of organization, construction, and expansion over which Dr.



Tory had so ably presided, an era for which his tireless energy and his indomitable optimism peculiarly fitted him. He came to Alberta to find a river-lot, covered with scrub, on which he was expected to work out the plans of a permanent home for the university, and that is about all he found. He went boldly forth and literally discovered his first class of students. He wrestled with principalities and powers to get his scheme accepted, and was forced to call into play all his diplomatic talents more than once to avoid shipwreck. He replaced, before his term ended, the decaying log-barn on river-lot number 5 by teaching buildings, laboratories and residences valued at three million dollars, and began the great task of beating the campus into shape by ploughing, levelling, and planting. He started his work with four professors and forty students and ended it with a staff of one hundred and twenty-five and a student body of fifteen hundred. He began with the university of Alberta as a mere name and nothing more, and was able in his twenty years of administration to bring the institution to the point where a mere name had become a title of dignity and respect which any alumnus may be proud to indicate as the origin of his degree. For the men and women who graduated from the university of Alberta between 1912 and 1928, it would be difficult to think of the university of Alberta without including in that thought the names of Dr. and Mrs. Tory. The latter will feel herself sufficiently praised in the praise accorded to her husband, but it would be less than fair if this third episode were concluded without a mention of the kindly manner in which she sustained the arduous social duties that fell to her position. And so the third episode concludes in a shower of golden memories which the first president shares with the now extensive alumni body of the university of Alberta and the members of the staff, especially those associated with him in those early years, so trying oft times and yet so full of inspiration for the heart and laughter for the lips.

## EPILOGUE.

A happy choice brought to Edmonton in August, 1928, as Dr. Tory's successor, Dr. Robert Charles Wallace, formerly professor of geology in the university of Manitoba, and at one time sole administrator of northern Manitoba in the true proconsular manner. To some his nationality would be a sufficient recommendation, to others his academic and professional record, to others yet again his administrative experience, but his chief appeal around the university of Alberta has so far lain in the genial frankness with which he has



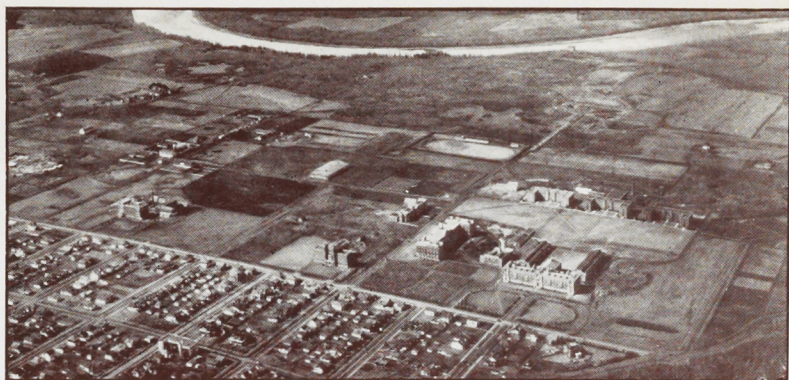
approached his problems, and in the kindly humor that illuminates his public utterances, especially at intimate university functions. The name of Wallace will be the conjuring word with the next generation of Alberta graduates.

The problem which he faces is a great one from so many different angles. The university is literally outgrowing its clothes; where are students to be put if the present rate of increase is maintained? Graduates who have not seen students sitting on the floor or in the embrasures of class-room windows, or even standing, can hardly realize how pressing is this consideration alone. A glance during term into what serves at present as a library is bound to be informing, and if one says that it has hardly the "air" of a library, there will be many to understand the pun. During the ten years of the "new order" the laboratory has had the inside track on the library; obviously the time has arrived to redress the balance. A library building is "indicated," as the doctors say and, of course, a library building without books is about as useful as a watch-case without works inside. The very thing on which so much emphasis has been laid during the last decade, research, is seriously hampered by the constant impossibility of finding out what has already been done.

Years ago a pile of gravel was hauled up and laid down south-west of Pembina, the "makings" of the university gymnasium. Nothing has happened in the interval except the disappearance of the gravel to be applied to other purposes. Ten more classes have left the place with the most depressing memories of a make-shift "gym" with antique and badly-worn apparatus, and a shower-bath service which is better left to the gloomiest resources of a Dantesque imagination. That out of these poverty-stricken conditions the students of the university have been able to achieve the successes which have crowned their efforts, as in the winning of the Cairns intercollegiate track trophy and the Hardy cup for intercollegiate football during the autumn of 1928, speaks volumes for their grit and devotion. But such qualities must not be traded on too long. There is no piece of work around the university of Alberta more valuable than the turning out year by year of young men and young women who have been given a full opportunity to make the body the fit housing of a trained mind. And more especially is this so in a country where the coincidence of winter with a large part of the college year creates the necessity of adequate provision for indoor athletics.

The systematic beautification of the campus calls for a more spirited campaign. Good buildings, unless they are provided with attractive surroundings, fail largely to produce the





University Campus, April, 1929

educative effect which should be theirs. Obviously beauty of some sorts is denied us Hyperboreans, but there is a special type of beauty which fits the north, and it presents a fairly wide range in which to work. No memory of student days could be more important than the memory of beauty; the effect upon the mind of some of those Oxford closes is beyond calculation. Of course, the beauty of Oxford has come by process of time, but there must have been a moment when it was begun. This, with the other physical problems which have just been mentioned, is something facing the new president and the government of the province, but the alumni have an interest and a duty there not to be overlooked or denied.

Then too there is the most significant thing of all, the erecting of this university of Alberta into the common spiritual symbol of all the people of this province, whatever their race or creed. Though much is finished, much remains, and one may surmise that it is a task which appeals to the nature of Dr. Wallace. There will be some to remember how in the early days of his presidency he told us a capital story which turned upon the Latin words *magnas inter opes inops*. The fate which those words indicate, "resourceless amid great resources," is the last thing he would care to see happen to this university, because the ultimate test of its greatness will be not what it did materially but what contribution it offered towards making possible for the men and women of Alberta the "good life" of the mind and soul. It would be a terrible judgment in the end if the voice of history, while admitting our material achievements, should have to add: "These things ought ye to have done, and not left the other undone."



For the university of Alberta had its beginning as a spiritual adventure, as was recognized by its baptism in the name of the great humanistic studies, and it cannot go back on that beginning. It must cultivate the arts and sciences by which the nations find their daily bread, but it cannot forget that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Whatsoever things are true" is the motto on its escutcheon, and that cannot mean just the material facts of the human environment. It must mean as well the things that nurture the man himself. In the true balance of these aims the greatness of her future lies, a future for which the past gives much assurance.











